

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
January 21 & 22, 2004**

The regular meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m., on January 21, 2004 in Room 1D2 of the Transportation Building in Olympia, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Davis, Ed Barnes, Elmira Forner, George Kargianis, A. Michèle Maher, Dan O'Neal and Dale Stedman. Chair Davis

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY REPORT

John Conrad, Assistant Secretary, Engineering and Regional Operations Division, provided an update regarding the Hood Canal Bridge graving dock site. Archeological investigations are still underway at the graving dock site. Federal historical preservation standards require that all parties involved sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in order to move forward with construction. Several mitigation proposals have been discussed with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe over the last few months, and the basic MOA document draft language is nearly complete. As part of the mitigation a site treatment plan has been prepared which includes construction monitoring, additional testing, data recovery of the known archaeological site area and procedures for handling further discoveries.

Gummada Murthy, Director, Maintenance and Operations Programs, provided a briefing regarding the cost incurred to maintain the highways during the recent snowstorm. Throughout the storm the Department staff kept the public informed of travel conditions through a variety of media. The Department's communication team worked with news reporters prior to the first snowstorm to inform the public of the Department's readiness for snowy conditions and to offer winter driving tips.

Chris Christopher, State Maintenance Engineer, provided specific information regarding the Department's maintenance of the highways and public communication that took place during the snowstorm.

Commissioner Stedman suggested that the Department consider creating a pilot program that would implement a way of providing notification to the trucking industry of pass closures.

Commissioner Kargianis introduced recently appointed Nate Naismith, the new Staff Coordinator for the Legislative Transportation Committee.

Secretary MacDonald provided an overview of the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) annual performance audit results. The 2003 Performance Letter from FHWA, Division Administrator, Daniel M. Mathis, summarized the overall results stating that "based on the inspections, reviews, program evaluations and audits conducted in FY 2003, the Department has complied with federal laws and regulations in expending federal-aid highway funds allocated to the State of Washington." Secretary MacDonald commented that

this year's report from FHWA is a valuable tool in helping the Department demonstrate and improve upon the success of its efforts.

Todd Harrison, Assistant Regional Administrator, Mount Baker and Ron Paananen, Deputy Northwest Region Administrator, briefed the Commission regarding the status of SR 20. The North Cascades Highway (SR 20) from milepost 134 to milepost 170 has been closed due to the after effects of severe flooding that caused massive rockslides onto the highway. The Department is working with rockslide experts to stabilize the hillside. The Department recognizes the economic importance of SR 20 and is making every effort to address the damage and repair the highway.

Kevin Dayton, State Construction Engineer, provided a briefing regarding the 2003 Construction Highlights Report. This is the third year that the Department has put together this report in order to share examples of the variety of projects constructed in different conditions and environments across the state. Customers will have the opportunity to tell the Department what they think of the projects by completing an opinion questionnaire. Customer responses will help the Department to better understand public expectations and to improve the way projects are managed.

Secretary MacDonald provided a briefing regarding the Department's participation in the Transportation Research Board (TRB) 2004 annual meeting in Washington D.C. He also provided updates on the status of the ferry food service and procurement of new vessels Request For Proposals (RFP).

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET UPDATE

Bill Ford, Budget Chief, Budget Services, introduced Theo Yu, Senior Budget Assistant, Office of Financial Management. Mr. Yu provided a briefing regarding the 2004 Governor's Supplemental Budget Proposal. He outlined the shortfall impact to the Motor Vehicle Account due to Initiative 776. Instead of canceling any state highway or ferry projects to address the impact, the budget uses revenue forecast adjustments, existing fund balances, and additional federal funds to keep the projects on schedule. Mr. Ford outlined the comparisons between the Governor's budget proposal and the Department's request, pointing out the reasons that the differences occurred.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Commissioner Barnes, and seconded by Commissioner Maher to approve meeting minutes for December 17 & 18, 2003. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

Natalie Zukowski speaking on behalf of Port of Tacoma Commissioner, Jack Fabulich and Seattle Port Commissioner, Bob Edwards, as members of Puget Sound Regional Council's Executive Board are in full support of nominating the southern section of SR 99 as a Highway of Statewide Significance.

David Irons, King County Metro Council, expressed his support of nominating SR 169 as a Highway of Statewide Significance.

Meta Heller, Common Ground USA, shared her concerns regarding property taxes, land values and funding of transportation improvements.

John Fratt, resident of Vancouver, shared that the Corps of Engineers has approved the deepening of the Columbia River Channel. He thanked the Commission and the Department for their efforts and support of the project.

Randy Boss, resident of Gig Harbor, shared his concerns regarding the safety of the Burley-Olalla Interchange. He requested that the project be moved forward. He also commented that interested parties in Kitsap, Pierce and Mason Counties proponents of revisiting the 1992 Cross Sound Transportation Study.

Blaine Highfield, Kitsap County, shared that he agrees with revisiting the 1992 Cross Sound Transportation Study.

Anthony Hempstad, SR 169 Improvement consortium, requested that the Commission strongly consider adding SR 169 as a Highway of Statewide Significance.

ISSUES RELATING TO STUDDED TIRES

Representative Lynn Schindler stated that she is not supportive of banning studded tires.

Matt Alton, Co-owner, Alton's Tires, provided a briefing to the Commission regarding the use of studded tires. He explained his reasons for supporting the use of studded tires, and shared informational data from several studded tire studies that he has reviewed.

Chair Davis suggested that the Department review the data that Mr. Alton presented and respond at the February Commission meeting.

Representative Schindler suggested that the request to ban studded tires might motivate the tire industry to develop better tires. She also commented that the any type of pavement surface might be considered in any evaluation of the impact from studded tires.

HIGHWAYS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE (HSS) UPDATE

Dennis Dowdy, Public Works Director, City of Auburn, introduced Mayor John Wise, City of Enumclaw and Mayor Peter B. Lewis, City of Auburn. Mr. Dowdy stated that SR 164 is a principal arterial and should be considered for HSS nomination.

Mayor Wise shared his concerns regarding the safety of SR 164. He also indicated that SR 164 is a main disaster route for the area, and that if all of SR 164 is not considered for HSS, then at least the portion from Enumclaw to Auburn should be considered.

Mayor Lewis stated that SR 164 has always had traffic congestion problems that create serious safety concerns.

Charlie Howard, Director, Strategic Planning and Programming, presented the final recommendations for additional Highways of Statewide Significance. Mr. Howard outlined the criteria qualifying highways for HSS nomination. The Department's analysis does not recommend any deletions from the existing system and that six of thirteen nominated routes be approved for inclusion in the HSS system. The HSS nominations in Resolution No. 660 are SR 19 (between SR 104 and SR 20), SR 704 (a yet to be constructed route across Fort Lewis from I-5 to SR 7), SR 520 (between I 405 and SR 202) and SR 9/SR 530 (Woodinville to SR 530 then west to I-5). Department analysis considered state law, the guidance offered by the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) workgroup, and the case presented by the applicants in their nomination packages.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Neal, and seconded by Commissioner Forner to add SR 164 from Enumclaw to Auburn to the HSS nomination. The motion failed with Commissioners O'Neal and Forner voting yes, and Commissioners Davis, Barnes, Maher, Stedman and Kargianis voting no.

It was moved by Commissioner Kargianis, and seconded by Commissioner Maher to add SR 99 from the junction with I-5 in Fife northward to the junction with the proposed SR 509 freeway. The motion was approved unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Barnes, and seconded by Commissioner Kargianis to approve Resolution No. 660, Highways of Statewide Significance nomination, with the inclusion of SR 99. The motion was approved unanimously.

URBAN CORRIDORS UPDATE

Dave Dye, Administrator, Urban Corridors Office, provided an update on the status of the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID). The RTID allows for King County, Pierce County and/or Snohomish County to form a funding district to raise revenues to make improvements to highways of statewide significance, approaches to highways of statewide significance, and small percentage of off-system improvements. The RTID Executive Committee spent most of 2003 developing a draft plan, but with difficulties in King County and the recent polling led the Committee to postpone their release of a draft plan until more consensus is built in King County.

Amy Arnis, Co-Director, Strategic Planning and Programming, explained the Legislature's direction to the RTID regarding its financial planning and funding.

Judy Giniger, Director, Public Transportation and Rail Division, briefed the Commission regarding the I-90 Two-Way Transit and HOV Operations Project. The project is included in Sound Transit's *Sound Move*. The project would make transit and HOV improvements on the I-90 corridor between Seattle and Bellevue crossing Lake Washington via Mercer Island. The primary goal is to improve speed, reliability and access for regional transit. Increased traffic on I-90 between Seattle and Bellevue over the past decade requires transportation improvements to the corridor. A number of issues need to be resolved to allow this project to move forward from the preliminary engineering/environmental phase

into final design and construction. A Cost Estimate Validation Process (CEVP) was performed in January 2003 to evaluate an earlier project estimate. The CEVP indicated that there is a 90 percent likelihood that the cost to complete the preferred alternative will not exceed \$123 million. Approximately \$14 million is available from Sound Transit (\$5 million of Sound Transit funding has already been spent) in addition to \$15 million authorized in the 2003 Legislative Funding Package. It is anticipated that available funding is adequate to complete final design, however, additional funds are needed for construction.

Commissioner Stedman expressed his support of this project moving forward.

Ms. Giniger stated that the next step would be the record of decision, and environmental impact statement, and a memorandum signed by all parties amending the project. If this is executed it would come before the Commission for further action.

COMMISSION ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Jennifer Ziegler, Administrator, presented the proposed Commission retreat dates of April 22 and 23, 2004 to Commissioners for approval. Ms. Ziegler provided information on the status of transportation bills and upcoming legislative hearings.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING ALTERNATIVES REPORT (TIFA)

Jerry Ellis, Director, Transportation Economic Partnerships, introduced TIFA Legislative Oversight Committee Co-chairs, Senator Mary Margaret Haugen and Representative Fred Jarrett. Senator Haugen shared that her involvement in the TIFA study has been an enjoyable learning experience for her. Representative Jarrett explained that the study is a good primer and provides information about what is happening in other parts of the country. He stated that the study would be a useful resource manual. Senator Haugen commented briefly regarding federal funding, bonding and public private partnerships.

BUILDING PROJECTS THAT BUILD COMMUNITIES

John Conrad, Assistant Secretary, Engineering and Regional Operations, and staff provided a briefing regarding the Department's initiatives with local partners to uniformly develop more collaborative, community, and environmentally sensitive project development approaches.

Mike Horton, Manager, Engineering Services, Highways and Local Programs and John Milton, Assistant State Design Engineer, Urban Corridors, explained that the Department has seen a greater interest by communities in transportation planning as it impacts the livability and future economic vitality of their communities. The Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) has placed a greater emphasis on a balanced approach in developing projects that include safety, mobility, environmental and aesthetics. The Department has initiated a number of efforts to facilitate transportation development that takes into consideration several factors on all projects. The emphasis has been focused toward improving working relationships with communities by developing communication tools that provide outreach. In addition, the Department is leading various research projects

aimed at providing aesthetic solutions, while still meeting safety needs and ensuring that solutions have a reasonable probability for success prior to installation.

Julie Mercer Matlick, Community Liaison, Highways and Local Programs, provided samples of projects in smaller communities and shared the Department's successes in building collaborative partnerships.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Stedman shared that he has been working with Jerry Lenzi, Regional Administrator, Eastern Region, to develop working relationships with Department staff. He reported that he would be giving a lecture on transportation issues at Eastern Washington University.

Commissioner Kargianis reported that he has been attending the Puget Sound Regional Council, Executive Council meetings.

Commissioner O'Neal reported that he has been attending Regional Freight Mobility Roundtables. Meeting attendees are a combination of members of the trucking industry and the rail and shipping community.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION POLICY PROJECT INITIATIVES

Anne Canby, President, Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP), shared that STPP was formed in 1990 as a coalition of Washington environmental groups and has since expanded to include health, social equity, growth management, business and advocates for community participation in transportation. Current membership affiliation is near 700 around the country. STPP and its member affiliate share information and research projects. The group has a strong focus on environmental protections, maintaining historical resources, planning and the development of projects. Ms. Canby discussed smart growth perspectives relating to transportation agencies as they move toward becoming multimodal providers rather than one-product agencies. She went on to comment on aging transportation systems and necessary investments for these systems without adequate funding. Some things that need to be taken into consideration are institutional processes and underlying structures that are dealt with in order to move toward a balanced decision making process. Some of the technical tools utilized today need to be overhauled, particularly in metropolitan areas all over the country. She explained that communities should be educated to understand the interrelationships of land use, transportation and the expenses associated with development and growth. Ms. Canby closed her presentation sharing examples of what other transportation departments are doing with their long-term development plans.

Jennifer Ziegler, Administrator, provided a brief summary to the Commission of HB 2736 Streamlining Transportation Governance.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m., on January 22, 2003.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

AUBREY DAVIS, Chair

GEORGE KARGIANIS, Vice-Chair

EDWARD BARNES, Member

DALE STEDMAN, Member

ELMIRA FORNER, Member

DANIEL O'NEAL, Member

A. MICHÈLE MAHER, Member

DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

JENNIFER ZIEGLER, Administrator